

**WILLIAMSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORK SESSION #4
Monday, February 23, 2004**

A work session of the Williamsburg Planning Commission was held on Monday, February 23, 2004, at 3:30 p.m., in Conference Room 3A, Municipal Building, 401 Lafayette Street.

ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

Present were Commissioners Freiling, Young, Friend, Hertzler, McBeth. Commissioners Pons and Smith were absent. Also present was Planning Director Nester and Zoning Administrator Murphy.

Mr. Freiling called the meeting to order.

OPEN FORUM

Tom Patton, 505 Capitol Court, Aldrich House Bed and Breakfast, asked whether or not proposals were being considered to change regulations for Bed and Breakfast uses. Mr. Freiling said that the Commission is gathering information at this time and that the issue has been raised, but there are no specific proposals that have been made. Mr. Hertzler asked about demand for B&B lodging, and Mr. Patton said that occupancy is current at 40-50%, and that the supply of B&B rooms is probably OK for the next five years. There was additional discussion of the B&B issue, and Mr. Nester said that it should be evaluated during the Comprehensive Plan update to make sure that our regulations are accomplishing what we want, particularly for the downtown residential neighborhoods.

Debbie and John Keene, 718 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg White House B&B, said they came to Williamsburg and started their B&B in 2000. They said that if new B&Bs of larger size were established, they would be concerned about what would happen to the existing three, four and five room establishments. They said that they would ideally like to offer four additional rooms – the present four room limit for existing B&Bs can create difficulties.

Phil Craig, 501 Richmond Road, Colonial Capital B&B, noted that occupancy is a function of how well the property is maintained.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Nester presented a slide show in the history of Comprehensive Planning in Williamsburg, reviewing the Comprehensive Plans of 1953, 1968 and 1981. Points made by those past plans are listed below.

1953 Comprehensive Plan

- Future Trends: with 2/5 of community employees living elsewhere, a great potential for the enlargement of residential areas; continued increases in the number of visitors can be expected; potential for increase in retail trade by attracting more of the business of persons living within the trade area; College, Eastern State and adjacent military establishments can be counted on as important contributors to the local economy; the community has virtually no industrial development now, and future development of this kind should not be sought in order that the character of the city not be disturbed and the major elements in the economy protected; and the City Plan should provide for a large expansion in local residence areas in the most convenient and attractive locations, provide for increased accommodations for visitors and for a greater volume of retail trade with consequent increased traffic volumes, and so arrange these enlarged facilities that every possible protection is afforded to the Restored Area.
- Future Residential Growth: northwest along Richmond Road partly using lands owned by W&M and CW; filling in between Jamestown Road and College Landing Road (now S. Henry St.); northeast corner of the City; and extension of Highland Park to the north.
- The logical location for apartment houses is near the center of the City, with a density between 2,000 and 2,330 sq.ft. of lot area per unit.
- Future Highway Improvements: Rt. 132 (freeway type approach highway from the north); complete Colonial Parkway to Jamestown; extension of Lafayette Street to Richmond Road and York Street; Newport Avenue from S. England to S. Henry; extend Francis St. to Jamestown Road (never done).
- Substandard Housing: create Housing Authority; use urban renewal in downtown area; and adopt of minimum housing ordinance.S
- Schools: school consolidation approved in 1953, resulted in a new high school (James Blair), converting Matthew Whaley to elementary only, enlarging Bruton Heights for black elementary and high school.
- Future Parks: south of Indian Springs – 58 acres (now part of Coves/Port Anne); south of Highland Park – 27 acres (now Governor's Inn); end of Matoaka Court - 32 acres (now part of William & Mary Hall); Waller Mill Road adjacent to reservoir – 58 acres (now various development); and a small boat harbor on Queens Creek (Queen Mary Port)

1968 Comprehensive Plan

- Future Trends: large increase in population in next 20 years, which will require a variety of housing types; visitor facilities must be greatly expanded (1,500,000 visitors a year in 1985 projected); future purchasing power will encourage an extensive expansion of retail shopping facilities of high character; adequate land must be reserved for the expansion of major institutions (College, Eastern State); manufacturing unlikely to expand except at the expense of the colonial atmosphere so vital to the overall economic health of Williamsburg.

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- Future Residential Growth: provide appropriate locations for all types of residence, including apartments of high character; 275 acres shown as “medium-density residential”, appropriate for apartments (includes Greater West Williamsburg and Indian Springs/Griffin Avenue area, but notes that most of this area will be developed as single family).
- Factors for apartment location: deterrence of random scattering of apartments in future single-family areas; location near main academic, employment and recreation centers; access to major thoroughfares; and access to central sewage treatment plant.
- Future Commercial Growth: very large increase in visitor volume; “Williamsburg simply cannot permit its environs to develop as a great mass of motels, curio shops, restaurants, and general tourist ballyhoo which tends to surround anything which regularly attracts large numbers of people. The distinctive character of Williamsburg must be maintained at all costs. Visitor facilities must be restricted to appropriate areas, and when these are filled up, additional accommodations must be built elsewhere on the Peninsula, ” major shopping center proposed to the east (James York Plaza) and to the west (expansion of Williamsburg Shopping Center and Monticello Shopping Center); aAdditional tourist facilities along Capitol Landing Road; and new tourist area along Bypass Road near Richmond Road.
- Future Highway Improvements: Williamsburg Circumferential (Rt. 199) – joined I-64 along Airport Road; Intermediate Circumferential – west side of Lake Matoaka to Monticello Avenue (part of this is Compton Dr.), and Ironbound/Richmond Road to Hubbard Lane; Second Street extension to Brooks Street extension; Monticello Avenue extension to Ironbound Road; and Mt. Vernon Avenue extension to Ironbound Road (now Treyburn Drive).
- Future Downtown Improvements: numerous parking lots proposed, including demolition of Matthew Whaley for major tourist lot between Governor's Palace and North Henry Street; new Municipal Center including quarters for all City departments, additional public meeting space, storage space for equipment, and adequate off-street parking.
- Substandard Housing: urban renewal program proposed – led to WRHA and their projects.
- Schools: Matthew Whaley to be demolished for parking lot; new elementary school locations include Casey Fields, New Town, Richmond Hill, west of Highland Park; new High School locations include New Town and Kiwanis Park.
- Parks: special purpose park south of Matthew Whaley School site – offered primarily to tourists – an ideal place for a picnic lunch, and a much-needed gesture of municipal hospitality; College Landing and Capitol Landing parks proposed; swimming pools proposed at College Landing and Waller Mill Parks

1981 Comprehensive Plan

- Future Trends: Colonial Williamsburg attendance will not grow as rapidly as it has in the past unless a major effort is mounted to increase visitor capacity; future growth of City revenues will depend on sales to area residents, but an increasing proportion of this trade is shifting out of the City - to address this the City should develop a major shopping center to capture the growth which is predicted for the area trade.
- Future Residential Growth: areas designated "Medium Density Residential" are generally appropriate for apartments – low rise, up to three stories, 10-17 dwelling units per acre; it is important to maintain the small scale of all residential neighborhoods regardless of development type or density.
- Future Highway Improvements: Second Street extension - Page Street to Bypass Road, with connection to Monticello by bridge over railroad; connection between Parkway Drive and Merrimac Trail; extension of Boundary Street to the south.
- Future Downtown Improvements: Library Auditorium under construction; no plans for Courthouse expansion; relocate City Shop from Capitol Landing Road to present location; relocate large truck and bulk mail post office operations outside the central area of the City of Williamsburg; consider parking garage if commercial expansion takes place in Merchants Square.
- Substandard Housing: WRHA established in 1969; Armistead Avenue Urban Renewal Plan implemented, which resulted in Crispus Attucks subdivision, a site for a new fire station, and commercial revitalization of Triangle Block.
- College Student Housing: "The City should also initiate a special study of the residentially zoned areas adjacent to the College to determine the extent of the impact of students as evidenced by conversion of single-family housing to apartments and the number of student apartments in these areas. A plan should be developed from these studies to minimize the impact of college related activities such as on street parking."
- Schools: emphasis on maintenance and renovation; no mention of demolition of Matthew Whaley.
- Parks: numerous neighborhood parks recommended, including Crispus Attucks, Merrimac Trail, Mimosa Drive, New Hope Road, Capitol Landing East and West, Wythe Park; recommendation for College Landing Park; recommendations for expansion of Kiwanis Park, Quarterpath Park and Waller Mill Park.

OPEN FORUM

Tom Mainor, 506 Newport Avenue, said that hospital facilities should be a part of the Comprehensive Plan, rather than as a part of the Sentara business plan. The use to be made of the present hospital building should be a part of the Comprehensive Plan update. Mr. Mainor went on to say that a mixture of uses makes the City a more interesting place, and that it is important to maintain this diversity. Student housing should be integrated into the community in a healthy way.

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OTHER

Attendance of Commission members at “outreach” meetings was discussed. It was decided that Mr. Nester would email Commission members a list of the meetings that have been held and that will be held, and advise as to how many Commission members may attend absent a called Planning Commission meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Paul Freiling, Chairman
Williamsburg Planning Commission